

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



TONI ATKINS
COUNCILMEMBER
THIRD DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: George Biagi

(619)236-6633 Fax:(619)595-1481

gbiagi@sandiego.gov

Mayor Murphy And Deputy Mayor Atkins Join Community Saturday To Remove Final Utility Pole In 30th Street Undergrounding Project

Historic Event Marks First Time SDGE Buries 138kv Transmission Lines

SAN DIEGO -- Mayor Dick Murphy will join Deputy Mayor and Third District City Councilmember Toni Atkins Saturday, Feb. 28th, for a community event to celebrate the removal of the final utility pole in the \$8.5 million undergrounding project along 30th Street between University Avenue and Laurel Street in North Park. The project is the first of its kind in the city's history to bury massive 138 kv transmission lines. The event will take place at 3544 30th Street at the intersection of 30th and Capps Street on Saturday, at 10am. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

"This is a truly historic and exciting day for the residents of North Park and District Three," said Deputy Mayor Atkins. "To look down 30th Street and witness the dramatic improvement to the aesthetics of this thoroughfare and the immediate positive effect it has on this community is truly astounding. I can't wait to get our next major undergrounding project underway along Meade Avenue, stretching from Normal Heights all the way westward into University Heights."

The 30th Street project is really two different jobs that each had to be designed and built separately. One trench was needed for the 6,100 feet of electrical distribution, telephone and cable television lines of 61 customers, and another for the 6,800 feet of electrical transmission lines. SDG&E employed cutting-edge technology and engineering to facilitate the undergrounding of the 138kv lines.

"Councilmember Toni Atkins partners with me on my Goal #3, creating neighborhoods we can be proud of," Mayor Dick Murphy said. "One of our proudest accomplishments in pursuit of that goal has been the tripling of annual miles of undergrounding. It not only makes the wires safer and more reliable, it removes blight and beautifies our neighborhoods."

The project was selected by the City Council in October of 1999 and began construction in August 2001, meaning that project selection to start of construction was 10 months, while construction took approximately 30 months to complete. Historically speaking, this project would easily have taken twice as long to complete. However, despite the energy crisis which caused a five-month delay and the recent wildfires which caused a three-month delay, this project, a technologically innovative and ground-breaking endeavor, was able to finish in record time due to changes made by SDGE and the

city as part of a new program designed to expedite the undergrounding process.

"I have to applaud both SDG&E and Mayor Murphy for working so hard with us to make undergrounding a priority for our older, urban neighborhoods," said Atkins. "This project is the purest example of what can happen when government and public utilities work together to make a difference in our neighborhoods. It's efficient, it's cost effective, and it changes the look and feel of this community forever."

The most notable change that benefitted the 30th Street project is that it is one of the very first projects in which SDGE performed all the work for private property owners at no cost. This change shaved approximately 18-24 months off the finish time. For the 30 years that undergrounding has been happening in the city, property owners have had to hire their own contractors to convert their utility lines. As part of the new program, SDGE now offers to do the conversion for property owners at no cost and SDGE even installs the telephone and cable conduits for property owners at no cost.

Phase II of the 30th Street project, extending it south to "A" Street, is expected to begin construction in late summer or early fall of this year and to be completed by December 2005.

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